

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

MONDAY, May 6, 2002

3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Borys, Clement, Kreider, Raser, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger, and Wallace present. Absent: Bloomfield, Senhauser.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Monday, April 8, 2002 meeting were approved (motion by Borys, second by Clement) as amended.

The minutes of the Monday, April 22, 2002 meetings were approved (motion by Clement, second by Wallace) as amended.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 3441 OBSERVATORY PLACE, OBSERVATORY HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report on this request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal a non-contributing rear addition and the construction a new larger addition on this single-family residence at 3441 Observatory Place.

No one attended the pre-hearing held on April 30, 2002. There has been no correspondence from the Hyde Park Community Council. Ms. Kellam noted that most neighbors are aware of the project and in many cases have seen the plans.

Ms. Kellam stated that the rear addition did not appear on the 1922 Sanborn Map and that demolition of the addition does not jeopardize the historic significance of the main house.

The proposed new addition will be constructed in the same location as the previous addition. The new wood frame addition will be three-stories with a deck to the rear and a new patio. Ms. Kellam said the proposed design meets the applicable historic district guidelines pertaining to "Additions", in that it is compatible in size, scale, materials and design features with that of the house. Ms. Kellam expressed concern that the north elevation is windowless on the second floor, while there are elaborate prairie style windows at the basement and third floor levels.

Ms. Kellam stated the proposed foundation wall of the new addition is being changed to possibly concrete with a stucco finish, which she added may be more appropriate than trying to replicate the stone on the original house.

Owner Kit Perez was present to answer questions from the Board. Mr. Raser pointed out that the upper deck railing will be more visible than the lower and questioned its details. Ms. Perez stated that the upper deck railing was to be vinyl, but she did not know the manufacturer.

The Board discussed the expanse of blank wall on the north elevation, considering other detailing. Ms. Perez responded that the proposed interior layout does not lend itself well to windows. Ms. Borys stated her concern was not as much with lack of windows on the north elevation, but felt the addition was a bit massive in comparison to the domestic scale of the original house. She suggested the addition be offset a few inches to distinguish the two masses, without changing the interior plan. The Board concluded that while the north elevation and massing were concerns, overall, the addition is not detrimental to the historic house or district.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Borys, second by Wallace) to:

1. Find that the 16' by 13' two-story rear addition is a non-significant portion of the house and its demolition will not adversely affect those parts of the house which are significant.
2. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the rear addition and the construction of a new addition with the condition that the final construction documents be submitted to the Urban Conservator for approval prior to construction.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS and T-ZONE APPROVAL, 22 EAST 12th STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Cheri Rekow presented the staff report for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the temporary installation of a banner at 22 East 12th Street identifying the building as the future home of the Cincinnati Art Academy. The 6-story brick warehouse is a contributing building to the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District. The Academy installed the 9' x 35' banner, unaware that a permit was required.

A representative from the Art Academy attended the pre-hearing conference held on May 1, 2002. No other individuals appeared; although one adjacent property owner expressed support of the banner via telephone.

Ms. Rekow explained that the sign is classified as an announcement sign under the Zoning Code. Announcement signs are prohibited within the R-7 residential district where the building is located, but are common in this transitional district and in the abutting B-4 district, without a limitation on square footage. Ms. Rekow suggested that temporary relief to the institution is warranted considering it is identifying the new location of a well-established institution. The forthcoming renovation of the building also gives encouragement to the people in the area and positively impacts the historic district. Ms. Rekow said that even though the banner is properly sized and located on the building, the sign does not technically comply with the historic district guidelines because it is installed over existing windows and obscures architectural features.

Ms. Clement emphasized the need for the banner to be well maintained during the three-year period.

Mr. Raser expressed concern that a precedent was being set by allowing up to three years for a temporary sign. If a three-year time period is seen as a precedent, an applicant could utilize a temporary sign as a business sign. Mr. Forwood responded

that, in this case, the three-year time period is tied to the anticipated construction period. Mr. Kreider pointed out that in specifying that the renovation of the contributing building benefits the district, this would sufficiently explain the uniqueness of this particular situation.

Greg Smith, President of the Cincinnati Art Academy, responded that the three-year time period of the banner would benefit the Academy in its fundraising efforts for the renovation that is scheduled to start in the spring of 2004, and in communicating the relocation since the institution has been established in its present Mt. Adams location since 1887. Mr. Tom Patton, of 33 East 12th Street, spoke in favor of the sign.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Kreider, second by Borys) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the sign at 22 East 12th Street was installed without a building permit or a Transition Zone Hearing, and that it is a temporary announcement sign.
2. Find that the renovation of this contributing building and the announcement of the arrival of the higher educational institution will benefit the district in general.
3. Find that although the sign at 22 East 12th Street may not conform to the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District Guidelines, it is acceptable as a temporary banner.
4. Grant T-Zone approval and Certificate of Appropriateness for the temporary banner as installed for a period not to exceed September 30, 2005, provided the sign is well maintained.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS and T-ZONE APPROVAL, 1201 VINE STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Cheri Rekow presented the staff report for the installation of two wall-mounted signs on the south and east street elevations of this building located at 1201 Vine Street. The 4-story brick Italianate building is a contributing building to the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District. The signs were installed without a permit and the required T-Zone hearing.

A pre-hearing conference was held on May 1, 2002, at which no one appeared. Staff received a phone call from one adjacent property owner opposing the signs as installed.

Ms. Rekow explained the signs are classified as on-premise advertising signs and are prohibited in the R-7 district in which the building is located. In accordance with T-Zone regulations, such signs are permitted in the abutting B-4 district without size limits. Ms. Rekow said that, as proposed, the signs do not comply with the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District guidelines for signs and storefronts, because they overpower the building's storefront, clutter the facade and cover significant architectural features such as the pilasters on the Vine Street elevation.

Applicant/Business Owner Ray Daquer and Building Owner Robert L. Lenhardt, Jr. were present to respond to questions by the Board. Mr. Daquer confirmed that the

Glossinger's Pepsi projecting corner sign pre-existed the historic district designation and that his primary business was check cashing. Mr. Lenhardt stated that he owned the business for thirty of the 100 years of its existence, selling it to Mr. Daquer last year. He stated that the building was renovated in 2000; the brick was cleaned and much of the signage removed. He confirmed that a painted Barq's root beer sign had previously covered a large portion of the 12th Street wall.

The Board discussed appropriate sizes for the two signs. Ms. Rekow stated that the staff recommendation of a maximum 25 square foot sign over the Vine Street storefront was based on one square foot of signage per each lineal foot of building frontage. Ms. Borys acknowledged that while the sign on 12th Street may not be ideally compatible with the detail of the building, the renovation of the building and the occupancy of the retail tenant are important factors to consider. Ms. Borys stated her concern was primarily for the obstruction of the architectural details on the Vine Street elevation. Mr. Raser suggested a 25 square foot sign would fit well above the storefront and be as effective as the present sign.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Kreider, second by Clement) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the proposed signs are not consistent with the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District Guidelines.
2. Find that the signs at 1201 Vine Street were installed without a building permit or a Transition Zone hearing.
3. Disapprove the application for T-Zone approval of the wall sign on Vine Street as constructed for the reason that it adversely affects the character of the building and the historic architectural or aesthetic integrity of the district.
4. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the sign on 12th Street as installed and approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the new wall sign on Vine Street, not to exceed 25 square feet subject to review by the Urban Conservator for conformance to Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District Guidelines.
5. Grant T-Zone approval to retain the sign on 12th Street as installed and to install a wall sign on Vine Street not to exceed 25 square feet and subject to review by the Urban Conservator for conformance to Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District Guidelines.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS & DD VARIANCE, 125 WEST 9th STREET, NINTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented the staff report for a Certificate of Appropriateness and Downtown Development Variance for the construction of a detached two-car garage at 125 West 9th Street.

The building is a contributing resource within the 9th Street Historic District and is located in the Downtown Development District. Smooth-face buff-colored cement panels will be used to sheathe the walls of the building. Smooth-face gray and several rows of a gray corrugated panel will create a cornice line above the garage

door. The foundation will be split-face concrete block. Ms. Cowden showed the Board product information material samples.

A pre-hearing was held on April 30, 2002. The architect/owner, Ralph Bolton attended. No property owners or other parties attended the meeting or contacted staff regarding the project. However, Mr. Bolton indicated that he discussed the project with Patrick Korb, owner of 127 and 133 West 9th Street, and Robert E. Manley, resident of 221 West 9th Street and they expressed support for the project.

Ms. Cowden stated that the historic district guidelines do not specifically address the construction of secondary structures; however, the proposed garage fits in with the historic district due to its size and location and appearance of materials and details.

Ms. Cowden said the DD district does not permit the construction of detached accessory structures. She pointed out that the proposed design for the detached garage is more acceptable than an addition that would be permitted by the Zoning Code. No variance would be required if the garage had been attached. She also informed the Board that the 1920 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows a secondary brick structure in the exact location of the proposed garage.

Ms. Sullebarger expressed concern that the proposed wall material is not one found on historic buildings or elsewhere in the district. Ms. Cowden elaborated on the guidelines addressing new construction stating that while obviously new, materials must be compatible with materials found in the district. She stated that brick and smooth face stone are prevalent in the district.

Mr. Ralph Bolton was present to respond to questions from the Board. In response to Mr. Kreider, he said the proposed exterior panels are quite durable and have been used in England for thirty years. He said he has used the material on other buildings in the City. He stated that he considered using brick, but he feels more comfortable with the material they are proposing than brick. He said he would probably be planting aggressive vines that will grow over the entire garage.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted (motion by Borys, second by Kreider, Raser recused) (Ayes: Borys, Clement, Kreider, Raser, and Wallace; Nay: Sullebarger) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the garage meets the Ninth Street Historic District guidelines and approve a Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that final construction drawings and proposed exterior finishes/elements be submitted to the Urban Conservator for approval prior to construction; and
2. Grant approval of a Downtown Development Variance, finding that such relief:
 - a. Is necessary and appropriate in the interest of historic conservation so as not to adversely affect the historic, architectural or aesthetic integrity; and
 - b. Will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare or injurious to the property in the district or vicinity.

**UPDATE, WASHINGTON PARK, K-12 ARTS SCHOOL, OVER-THE-RHINE
SOUTH HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Urban Conservator William Forwood stated that the Board had reviewed the preliminary design for this project in October 1998. Since that time, there has been considerable design development. Mr. Forwood explained that the presentation was intended to be informational and that no formal action was required.

Architects Jeff Dodge and Tim Colchin of Cole & Russell presented an update of this project. Mr. Dodge explained that the Cincinnati Public Schools, the Greater Cincinnati Arts and Education Center and the Ohio School Facilities Commission jointly fund the project. Cole & Russell Architects were selected last summer to begin this phase of the project, which includes conceptual design and elevation studies.

The new school will be a combination of Schiel Primary School for Arts Enrichment and the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA), a unique facility that will provide arts education from kindergarten through 12th grade. Mr. Dodge explained that the project now totals about 300,000 square feet, down 150,000 square feet from what had been proposed three years ago.

The program provides for is a semi-professional facility for students for approximately 1500 students. The building program includes an 850-seat auditorium with a full stage, a black box theater, and gymnasium.

Mr. Colchin said the architects were faced with several important considerations including: 1) the demolition/fate of the existing 7-story warehouse on the south side of 12th Street, 2) the several existing residential properties on 12th Street, 3) the Pipefitters' Building on Central Parkway, and 4) the massing/materials of the new building.

Mr. Colchin stated that the new construction will be limited to the north side of 12th Street and will not affect the warehouse or residences on 12th. He pointed out that his firm has recommended that the residential properties on 12th Street be acquired; if purchased, any new use would be behind the front façade of those buildings. The Pipefitters' Building will be retained and incorporated into the complex with slight alterations.

When viewing from Central Parkway, there are two, symmetrical 5-story wings forming a "U" around an elevated open plaza. The primary entrance would be on Central Parkway. Administrative space, food service and backstage functions would be below the courtyard. The primary academic space is located on the 5th floor composed largely of glass. The primary open area is the elevated plaza facing Central Avenue, but consideration is being given for additional space on the rooftop or along 12th Street.

The massing and materials have been chosen to be sympathetic in scale and texture to buildings in the area, particularly to Music Hall. Architectural details are more contemporary interpretations of those found on neighborhood buildings. Mr. Colchin pointed out there will also be a bridge (not shown on the rendering) to the WCET parking garage.

Mr. Raser suggested that the design did not need to be so symmetrical and that a portion of the building could be taller, perhaps seven floors or more. Mr. Colchin said that earlier plans had included renovating the warehouse on the south side of

12th Street and connecting it to the main buildings by a bridge. Their client asked that the project be limited to the north side of 12th Street and the height be kept below five floors.

Ms. Borys complimented site plan with its raised courtyard and the placement of the entry, but agreed with Mr. Raser that absolute symmetry was not necessary. She questioned the necessity for the overt historical references at the two corner blocks.

Ms. Sullebarger commented that she felt there was an interesting play between symmetry and asymmetry, and between the new construction and the Pipefitters' building. She said she would like the entrance to be more defined.

In response to Mr. Kreider, Mr. Colchin stated that there is going to be shared functional spaces between the theatre and Memorial Hall, including delivery and food service, and backstage functions. Access through the alley will keep such traffic off of 12th Street and Central Parkway. Mr. Dodge also explained that the existing church on the northwest corner of 12th and Elm, as well as Memorial Hall, is not part of the school.

Mr. Raser suggested that perhaps the most important element would be a strong cornice and with that, any shape of roof would work. Mr. Dodge responded that the School Planning Team feels strongly about sloping roofs and understands the overpowering context of Music Hall. He added that they realize that the Pipefitters' Building is the last remnant of the Cincinnati Music Academy, so there is a strong drive to keep that façade and use it to denote the region of entrance into the facility.

Proponent of the project, Mr. William Knodel, pointed out that there are a number of things still in flux. The Planning Team has been in conversations with WCET and the YMCA. They are also working with the School Board regarding the potential relocation of Washington Park School. He also expressed his desire to develop a tangible concept to provide an image to the public to assist them with fundraising. Ms. Norma Peterson commented that in an effort to resolve the parking issue, they are addressing exciting possibilities with the City, WCET and the Park Board.

Mike Burson, Director of Cincinnati Public Schools, expressed his enthusiasm for the project, but emphasized the difficulty in putting such a large facility into a very tight space.

BOARD ACTION

No official action was required by the Board. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt expressed the Board's enthusiasm for the project and its eagerness to see it developed.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

William L. Forwood
Urban Conservator

John C. Senhauser
Chairman

Date